Working in the UK - visa guidance for undergraduate and Masters students

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International Student Office

- Provides a visa advice service.
- Area of expertise is student-related visas.
- Information and guidance on post-study visa options.
Agenda

- Working under Tier 4
- Tier 2
- Start-up visa
- Other possible visas
Graduate Route

• Government announced in September 2019 it was introducing a new ‘Graduate Route’ which will enable international students to apply for a two year post-study visa on completion of degree.

• Full details have not yet been confirmed.

• However, the Home Office has advised it will not be introduced until summer 2021.
University’s restrictions

• Undergraduate and Masters students are expected not to work during term-time.

• Work can be undertaken during official vacation periods.

• Dates for Masters students vary depending on course. Check with Faculty or Department.
Working during studies on Tier 4

Number of hours that can be worked on Tier 4 visa:

• Work for up to 20 hours a week during term-time.

• Unlimited hours in official vacation periods.

• Unlimited hours after course completion.

Course completion from a visa perspective is either official notification of approval for degree or the course end date stated on your CAS as long as you have completed all required assessment, whichever is earlier.
Working during studies on Tier 4

Cannot:

• Be self-employed;

• Engage in business activity;

• Fill a full-time permanent position;

• Work as a professional sportsperson (including coach), an entertainer or a doctor in training.

Further information:

www.internationalstudents.cam.ac.uk/tier-4-responsibilities/working-tier-4-visa
Tier 2 (General)

For those who obtain an offer for a graduate level job with a registered Sponsor, paying industry equivalent salary either before your Tier 4 visa expires or from overseas if you meet other requirements.

Tier 2 Policy Guidance: www.gov.uk/tier-2-general/apply
Tier 2 (General)

- Employer must be on Tier 2 Sponsor Register
- Job must be at graduate level or above as outlined in the Immigration Rules Appendix J: code of practice for skilled work.
- Minimum salary level specific to occupation, also outlined in Immigration Rules Appendix J:
  - ‘New entrant’ rate is applicable to those switching from Tier 4.
  - Lowest possible is £20800 but many occupations higher.
Periods of initial sponsorship under Tier 2

• Up to 3 years and 1 month if the ‘new entrant’ minimum salary rate is met.

• Up to 5 years if the ‘experienced worker’ rate is met.
Special provisions for switching between Tier 4 to Tier 2 in the UK:

• Employers are exempt from having to undertake the Resident Labour Market Test.

• Issuing of Certificate of Sponsorship is not subject to annual limit.

• Employer does not have to pay the Immigration Skills Charge.
Switching requirements (applying inside the UK):

- Once you have completed your degree OR
- Up to 3 months prior to the expected completion date of degree.
Tier 2 (General)

Visa application is Points-Based:

• 30 points – Eligible to switch inside UK (exempt from Residence Labour Market Test)

• 20 points – Meet minimum level salary

• 10 points – English Language (Cambridge degree)

• 10 points - Maintenance - £945 held for 90 day period or Sponsor certifies they will cover.
Application costs

• Application to switch inside the UK for a sponsorship period up to 3 years: £723.20

• Application switch inside the UK for a sponsorship period more than 3 years: £1427.20

• Plus Immigration Health Surcharge at £400 per year of sponsorship.

• Priority and premium services available at additional cost.
Start-up visa

For graduates who demonstrate high entrepreneurial potential and wish to set up a business in the UK for the first time.
Start-up visa

- 2 year visa.
- Bridge into Innovator visa.
- University-administered via an interview and application process.
- Can work but expected to spend majority of time on developing business.
Tier 5 Youth Mobility

- For individuals of certain nationalities- Australia, Canada, Japan, Monaco, Hong Kong, South Korea, Taiwan, New Zealand or are a British overseas, British overseas territories citizen or a British national (overseas).

- Aged between 18-30.

- Valid visa for 24 months.

- Have to apply from overseas.

- Further information: www.gov.uk/tier-5-youth-mobility
UK Ancestry

• For individuals who are a commonwealth citizen, are planning to work and have a grandparent who was born in the UK.

• Valid for 5 years.

• Must apply from outside of the UK.

• Further information: www.gov.uk/ancestry-visa
Further information:

www.internationalstudents.cam.ac.uk/visas-after-studying

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